

Town of Richmond

Proposal for 2022 Coverage

October 2021



VLCT PACIF

| The Power of Pooling





89 Main Street, Suite 4
Montpelier, VT 05602
800-649-7915 | 802-229-9111
info@vlct.org | vlct.org

October 26, 2021

Joshua Arneson
Richmond Town Manager
Town of Richmond
P.O. Box 285
Richmond, VT 05477

Dear Josh,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of VLCT PACIF, I am pleased to present the Town of Richmond with the attached proposal for comprehensive coverage and risk management services for 2022.

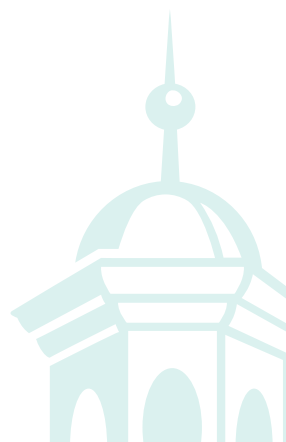
PACIF's strong reputation as the leader in property/casualty and workers' compensation coverage for Vermont's municipal entities is evidenced by its exceptional member retention rate and the fact that 95% of eligible Vermont municipalities choose to be members. They trust PACIF and recognize the value of the services and coverage that we provide. For 2022, PACIF's financial strength has permitted us to keep rates flat, to the benefit of our members, while continuing to provide high value services that members have become accustomed to. This makes 2022 the fourth consecutive year without an overall rate increase.

This proposal details the many benefits of PACIF, including the lines of coverage and limits, exclusive services, and innovative programs – and how they all work together to offer a highly effective risk management program for your municipality. We look forward to discussing this proposal with you and welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read "Fred Satink".

Fred Satink
Deputy Director, Underwriting & Loss Control



THE POWER OF POOLING:

Diving into the Value of State League Risk Pools

Based in part on a member's testimony after an insurance agent offered to quote on the municipality's property/casualty and workers' compensation insurance.



MUNICIPALITY-BASED

Municipal governments are organized and governed differently from private companies. Many laws are unique to the operation of municipal government, making it incumbent upon cities and towns to "pool" their resources and share their risks with similar entities.



ALIGNED WITH THE LEAGUE'S MISSION

All of the people behind PACIF and VERB look out for members' needs and for unseen risks. Steadfastly having the backs of Vermont municipalities is the reason the VLCT trusts exist.



MEMBER-OWNED

PACIF and VERB are owned by Vermont municipalities and operated by VLCT staff who report to governing boards comprising officials from member municipalities. The insurance and related programs offered are the best available because they are tailored to meet the needs of members in general and each community in particular.



NOT JUST TRANSACTION: INTERACTION

Commercial insurers use a transactional business model in which customers buy a pre-set product. This simply doesn't measure up in "apples to apples" comparisons with all that VLCT offers. And when commercial insurers don't need municipal business to make the profits they seek, their prices go up markedly. Sometimes coverage is even unavailable. PACIF and VERB interact with members, often one-to-one, and provide additional benefits, programs, and opportunities.



CUSTOMER-CENTRIC

Members' needs and concerns are the prime motivator for what VLCT's trusts offer and how they are operated. Staff in all divisions understand the challenges faced by municipalities and focus on providing excellent service and useful resources. Many forms of training as well as specialized consultation and funding through grants & scholarships add important value beyond coverage. Our goal is to help municipalities determine their own path of risk management.



CONTRIBUTION CREDITS

As owners of the VLCT trusts, municipalities benefit directly when contributions (premiums) exceed claims and other operational expenses. VLCT staff, at the direction of the boards, set aside adequate reserves to guard against unusually large claims and put reinsurance in place for added protection for the occasions that claims may go above insurance limits. Almost every year, when the trusts confirm that funds reserved to cover previous years' claims can safely be released, members receive contribution credits.





Town of Richmond

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Town of Richmond's Quote for 2022 Coverage

QUOTE FOR COVERAGE

Property & Casualty by Coverage Line	
Property <i>Buildings, contents, property in the open, and equipment breakdown at all locations</i>	\$23,188
Vehicles and Mobile Equipment	\$14,618
General Liability <i>Includes products liability, completed operations, and volunteers at all locations</i>	\$16,869
Law Enforcement Liability	
Firefighters Liability	
Ambulance/Rescue Liability	
Sewer Backup (No-Fault)	
Dams - Downstream Liability	
Employee Benefits Liability	
Public Officials Liability	\$4,174
Employment Practices Liability	\$4,869
Crime and Fidelity <i>Includes all officials and employees</i>	\$1,189
Accident Policy for Municipal Volunteers	Included
Total for Property & Casualty	\$64,908
Workers' Compensation	\$54,502
Workers' Compensation for Volunteer Firefighters ("Assigned Risk")¹	\$3,434
Cyber Liability and Data Breach Response	Included
CONTRIBUTION CREDIT	(\$7,406)
SPECIAL ONE-TIME RELEASE OF NET POSITION	(\$9,497)
2022 TOTAL CONTRIBUTION	\$105,941



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NOTE: Rates are subject to approval by the Vermont Department of Financial Regulation.

PROPERTY

Deductible: \$1,000 Per Occurrence	
Building and Contents Limit	\$17,496,468
Buildings	Guaranteed Replacement Cost, subject to certain limitations
Coinsurance Penalty	None
Flood Coverage Limit	\$10,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually, subject to a \$50,000,000 annual aggregate all Fund Members combined for properties not in flood zones A or V. For properties located in flood zones A or V or prefixed with A or V: \$1,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually, subject to a \$5,000,000 annual aggregate all Fund Members combined. Flood loss to bridges shall be subject to \$1,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually with a \$5,000,000 annual aggregate all Fund Members combined
Earthquake Limit	\$10,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually, subject to a \$50,000,000 annual aggregate all Fund Members combined. Earthquake loss to bridges shall be subject to a \$1,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually with a \$5,000,000 annual aggregate all Fund Members combined
Equipment Breakdown (Boiler & Machinery) Limits	\$17,496,468
Property Coverage Sub-limits:	
Municipal Income, Extra Expense	\$1,000,000
Data Processing Systems Equipment	\$1,000,000
Data Processing Media	\$1,000,000
Accounts Receivable	\$1,000,000
Valuable Papers	\$1,000,000
Property in Transit	\$1,000,000
Ordinance and Law	\$1,000,000
Unintentional E&O in Property Scheduling	\$1,000,000
Debris Removal	Included
Asbestos Abatement	\$1,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually all Fund Members combined
Pollution Removal and Clean-up	\$150,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually
Mold	\$1,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually all Fund Members combined
Newly Acquired Property	90 Days
Fire Department Equipment	Included
Food Contamination/Spoilage	Included
Personal Property of Others	Included
Portable Equipment	No Charge
Computer and Media Coverage	No Charge
Act of Terrorism	\$10,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually. \$500,000,000 per occurrence and annual aggregate all Fund Members combined



Flood Coverage

We provide coverage for property that is exposed to flood loss.



Earthquake Coverage

We provide coverage for your property without adding a high deductible like some carriers.

AUTO LIABILITY AND PHYSICAL DAMAGE

Deductible: \$1,000 Per Occurrence	
Liability Limits	\$10,000,000
Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist (UM/UIM)	\$250,000
Fire Trucks and Mobile Equipment	Modified ACV
Autos	Actual Cash Value
Hired and Non-owned Vehicles	Included

GENERAL LIABILITY

INCLUDES: LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FIREFIGHTER LIABILITY

Deductibles: \$2,500 Per Occurrence Law Enforcement Liability; \$1,000 Per Occurrence All Other	
General, Law Enforcement, and Firefighter Liability Limit	\$10,000,000 per occurrence
Aggregate Limit	None
Pollution Amendment Limit	\$500,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually
Road Salt Application Limit	\$20,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually
No-Fault Sewer Backup Limit	\$10,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually
Covered Dam Limit (Downstream Liability)	\$1,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually
Employee Benefit Liability Limit	\$10,000,000 per occurrence
Sovereign Immunity Defense	Yes
Coronavirus Limit	\$100,000 any one occurrence and in the aggregate annually for Coronavirus loss and \$100,000 any one occurrence and in the aggregate annually for Coronavirus expense, including defense. This coverage is subject to an annual aggregate combined single limit for loss and expense of \$2,000,000 for all Fund Members combined

PUBLIC OFFICIALS LIABILITY

Deductible: \$2,500 Per Claim	
POL Limit	\$10,000,000 combined single limit with EPL
Aggregate Limit	\$10,000,000
Retroactive Date	None

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES LIABILITY

Deductible: \$2,500 Per Claim	
EPL Limit	\$10,000,000 combined single limit with POL
Aggregate Limit	\$10,000,000
Retroactive Date	None
Non-Monetary Defense Limit	\$50,000

CRIME AND FIDELITY COVERAGE

Deductible: \$1,000 Per Claim	
Employee Theft and Faithful Performance Limit	\$500,000
Money & Securities Limit	\$50,000 inside and out
Money Orders and Counterfeit Money	\$25,000
Forgery & Alteration, Computer Fraud, and Funds Transfer Fraud Limit	\$50,000

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Experience Modification Factor: **.81**

Deductible: None	
Limits of Liability	Statutory
Employers Liability	\$5,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually
Class Code	Estimated Payroll 2022
5506 - Highway/Public Works	\$355,020
7520 - Water/Sewer	\$5,000
7710 - Fire/Rescue - Paid	\$0
7711 - Fire/Rescue - Volunteer	\$0
7720 - Police/Constable/Animal Control	\$406,000
8810 - Administration	\$ 360,991
8810L - Librarians	\$ 159,483
9102 - Parks & Recreation	\$0
Payrolls are subject to annual audit performed by PACIF's Underwriting staff.	

CYBER LIABILITY AND DATA BREACH RESPONSE

Coverage subject to a \$5,000,000 annual aggregate for all Fund Members combined	
Coverage Aggregate Limit of Liability	\$250,000
First Party Loss	
Business Interruption Loss, \$5,000 retention each incident	\$100,000
Cyber Extortion Loss, \$5,000 retention each incident	\$100,000
Data Recovery Costs, \$5,000 retention each incident	\$100,000
Reputational Loss, \$1,000 retention each incident	\$25,000
Liability	
Data & Network Liability, \$5,000 retention each Claim	\$250,000
Regulatory Defense & Penalties, \$5,000 retention each Claim	\$50,000
Payment Card Liabilities & Costs, \$5,000 retention each Claim	\$25,000
Media Liability, \$5,000 retention each Claim	\$250,000
eCrime	
Fraudulent Instruction, \$1,000 retention each loss	\$25,000
Funds Transfer Fraud, \$1,000 retention each loss	\$25,000
Telephone Fraud, \$1,000 retention each loss	\$25,000
Criminal Reward	\$10,000
Claims Expenses Aggregate Limit of Liability	
In addition to the Coverage Aggregate Limit of Liability	\$250,000
Breach Response	
In addition to the Coverage Aggregate Limit of Liability, \$0 retention each incident	\$75,000

All coverages described above are subject to the limits stated on the respective declaration pages and conditions, agreements, definitions, and terms of the coverage documents

18 Service Hours

- The Loss Control Consultant completed risk management surveys of the town garage, wastewater treatment plant, town office, fire station, Bridge Street playground, and Brown's Court ballfields, then recommended ways to improve safety in and around these facilities.
- The Law Enforcement Consultant provided experiential guidance on how to manage issues concerning the use of a take-home cruiser by a police officer.
- The Human Resources Consultant provided a wide range of guidance and support on numerous issues including FLSA, how to handle and compensate interns, benefit payment errors, Fire Department employment, and employee performance review and management.
- The Loss Control Consultant provided guidance on Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Clearinghouse requirements.

Program Engagement



PACIF Online Training

3 Town employees are enrolled in the new PACIF Learn system.



CMV Driver Drug & Alcohol Testing

PACIF makes it easy for the Town to comply with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration drug and alcohol testing regulations. Currently, **9 Town employees** are enrolled.



PACIF Grant

Richmond Town received a 2020 **PACIF Grant for \$3,622.44** to buy a bullet-proof vest, firefighter personal protective equipment, workzone safety equipment, and standing work stations, but has not yet taken advantage of the program in 2021.

EPL Referral

The Town used two Employment Practices Liability (EPL) referrals and received a total of **3.2 hours of free legal consultation** in response to high priority personnel situations.



Town of Richmond's **Service and Management Team**



KELLY KNOTEK

**Senior Underwriter
Marketing Representative**

12 years of underwriting experience

The Institutes Associate in Insurance and IAIP Certified Leadership Professional



FRED SATINK

**Deputy Director,
Underwriting & Loss Control**

30+ years of safety, industrial hygiene, and insurance experience



PEGGY GATES

**Manager, Workers'
Compensation Claims**

28 years of claims experience

Licensed Workers' Compensation claims adjuster, State of Vermont



KELLY KINDESTIN

**Manager, Property
and Casualty Claims**

30+ years of claims experience

Licensed Property & Casualty and Workers' Compensation claims adjuster, State of Vermont

Additional **in-house specialists**, available **exclusively** to PACIF members



JILL MUHR

**Senior Human
Resources Consultant**

28 years of human resources experience

Human Resources Certification (SHRM-SCP)



TREVOR WHIPPLE

**Law Enforcement Risk
Management Consultant**

30+ years of law enforcement experience



As of July 2021

Self-service Certificate of Insurance option in the PACIF Policy Portal

Special for 2022

Addition of Drone Endorsements to provide drone coverage when these are scheduled

Increase in limits for certain Crime Coverages
shown on page 4

A special one-time return of \$1.6 million to members as a special credit on their 2022 contributions

The standard practice of returning funds to members in the form of a contribution credit, which for the fourth year in a row is \$1.5 million

Expansion of the PACIF grant program to fund 100% of qualifying purchases for members completing 50% or more of their loss control recommendations

Reimbursement for KnowBe4 employee training for email users
explained on page 23

For You, Not For Profit

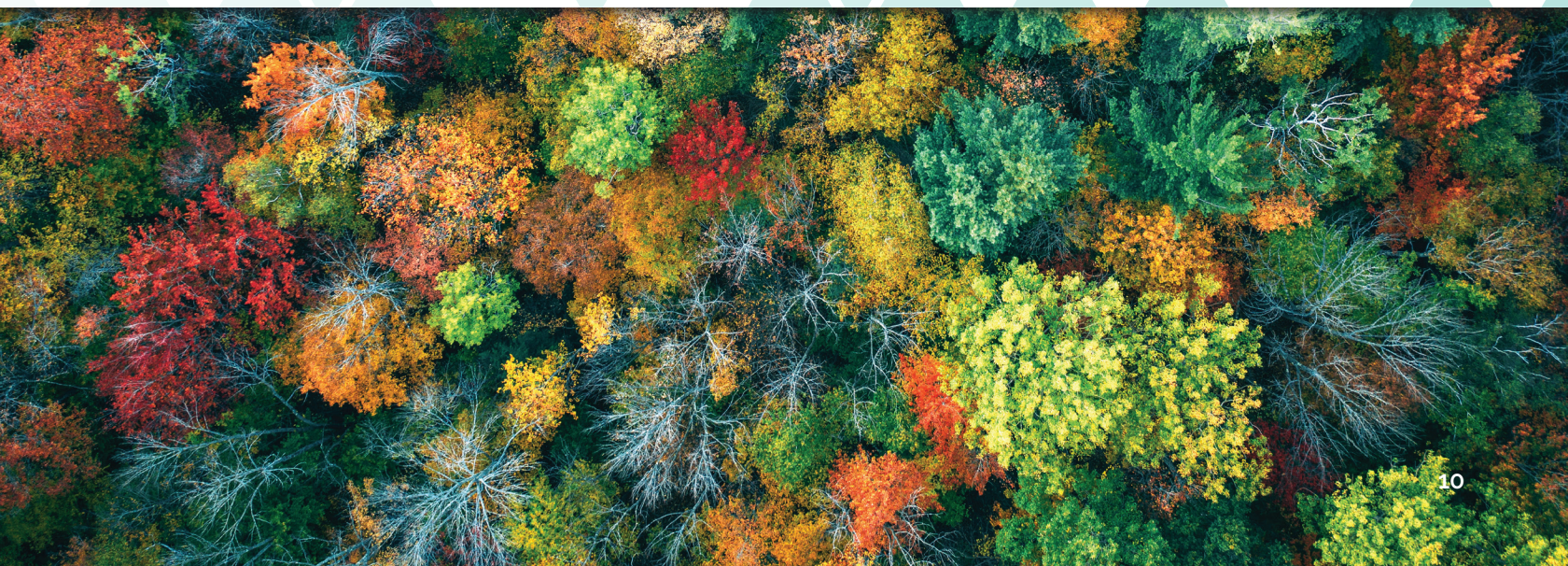
VLCT Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund (PACIF) is a not-for-profit, member-owned risk-sharing pool which **exists solely for the sake of Vermont municipal entities**. We look for ways to cover claims. Contributions that aren't needed to pay claims stay within the membership whether through credits toward the following year's contribution (premium) or improved programs and services. Grants and Scholarships extend municipal budgets while helping members protect themselves against future risk.

You Have a Say

When you vote at the annual meeting, talk with a board member, or explain your needs to staff, your concerns are heard and respected. **Members' needs and concerns have shaped PACIF into a combination of customized coverages with extensive member services, programs, and support**, resulting in a unique ease of doing business.

Regulated and Accredited

PACIF is regulated by the Vermont Department of Financial Regulation (DFR) to assure it meets statutory requirements and maintains fiscal integrity. DFR reviews and approves PACIF's coverages and rates every year and requires PACIF to file additional information throughout the year. Moreover, **PACIF is accredited by the Association of Governmental Risk Pools (AGRiP)** through its Advisory Recognition program for meeting a comprehensive range of risk pool management best practices.



Customized Coverage

PACIF's property coverage is essentially seamless, without gaps between categories. Member needs and requests have also led PACIF to extend and enhance coverage — for example, no-fault sewer backup liability, optional auto physical damage to first responders' personal vehicles while on calls, and – new for 2022 – drone liability and physical damage coverage.

Of Vermont Municipalities and For Vermont Municipalities

The statute that lays the groundwork for PACIF allows it to cover only Vermont municipal entities. As a member-owned and member-governed organization, PACIF represents one of the most successful collaborations between Vermont municipalities. **VLCT members had a need and then built a financially secure, comprehensive, yet affordable insurance program**, which is where PACIF stands today.

An Extension of Your Own Staff

With PACIF you don't just get a vendor, you get an ally — and teammates!

Enacting the VLCT mission includes working closely with you and your staff to help every part of your municipality get superior value from your insurance budget. Many of the program pages included here describe the free assistance that PACIF staff provide to members, imparting specialized knowledge in the areas of insurance coverage, VOSHA compliance, human resources, law enforcement, and safety-related loss control.



Richmond Town | In-State Staff with Real Municipal Experience

Because serving Vermont municipalities is PACIF's sole directive, our staff members have developed a deep understanding of the operations, exposures, and challenges that are unique to our members.

We employ our own claims adjusters, underwriters, and loss control consultants – qualified professionals who, like all PACIF staff, live in Vermont. No intermediaries are required to make up for adjusters being in another state, and because our claim adjusters have much smaller caseloads than at most commercial insurers, they can pay more attention to each claim. As a result, you have easy, direct access to us by phone and email, and we can meet you in person when a need arises, or opportunity allows. This provides you with the best possible claims service.

We answer your questions quickly and accurately because it's likely that we've encountered a similar issue before. **Our knowledge of day-to-day operations and many of the exposures that are unique to municipalities sets us apart from other insurance operations.**

PACIF and VLCT employees have served in municipal roles including firefighters, fire chief, police chief, selectboard member, town administrator, health officer, school board members, planning commission members, highway maintenance driver, and solid waste district representative.

Above all, **the dedication of PACIF staff is most evident in our attitude of alliance and cooperation with members.** With PACIF, it's all about our members.



In 2017, the Town of Coventry filed an exceptionally large claim of missing money. Never once did it feel like we were entering the dreaded battle against an impersonal insurance company. Instead, we were assisted and guided through the entire process by municipal experts who felt more like concerned friends. The support we received changed the history of our Town and put us back on the right track to a successful office. Thank you to PACIF for allowing us to completely trust and rely on you when we needed you the most.

Amanda Carlson
former Town Administrator
Coventry



Richmond Town | Superior Flood Coverage



Moretown was hit very hard by Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. It was devastating to come to work the next morning to find mud everywhere, five inches deep in our town office and vault. High water marks five feet up on our town office walls. Overhead doors on our fire station broken and hanging.

VLCT staff was here later that morning with a \$150,000 advance on our insurance so we didn't have to borrow money for immediate flood related needs, shouldering the grief and heartbreaking stories from Moretown residents, side by side with us in an emotional battle to comfort and help those in need. We formed trusting, long standing working relationships with VLCT staff over the recovery period, giving us the confidence that we can proceed to rebuild our town. I can't imagine that happening with commercial carriers.

I believe VLCT PACIF has strengthened our infrastructure, and the services we provide to our taxpayers, in that PACIF covered the necessary expenses involved to recover all vital records (deeds, surveys) from our vault, saving them from destruction. VLCT also replaced workstations and furniture, computers, and much more.

Cheryl Brown
Town Administrator
Moretown



Consider the financial hardship to your municipality if an important building were flooded significantly and turned out to be underinsured – or, even worse, not insured against floods at all. Flood risk is increasing in Vermont and nationally, and comprehensive **flood coverage is now more essential than ever for any municipality that has exposed property.**

Every PACIF member has comprehensive flood coverage for structures located outside the flood zone, with limits of \$10,000,000 per occurrence and in the aggregate annually, subject to a \$50,000,000 annual aggregate for all Fund Members combined. More importantly, for structures within flood zones A or V, PACIF provides \$1 million of flood coverage per member per occurrence and in the aggregate annually, subject to a \$5 million fund-wide annual aggregate – without resorting to high deductibles.

This compares favorably with the coverage that most agents access through the National Flood Insurance Program, which has limits of only \$500,000 for commercial properties, does not cover losses to contents or equipment below grade, may require an elevated deductible, and comes at significant extra expense.

PACIF flood coverage offers the type of financial peace of mind that Vermont municipalities need and deserve. It **fundamentally fulfills the primary objective of insurance: to protect buyers from the financial shock of fully bearing their own losses**, should they occur.

Appropriate and effective training is an essential component of minimizing risk, so we see providing useful tools and knowledge to decision makers and employees as a core element of PACIF's mission. While we can provide generic safety trainings, many years of experience with Vermont municipalities have convinced us that risk-focused education is much more effective for reducing losses. Using your time wisely and **imparting information that encompasses human resources, law enforcement liability, federal CDL driver compliance, workplace safety, and much more, we are your municipal training experts.**

All members have access to a variety of training opportunities free of charge. Our ideal approach is to **examine each member's needs closely and jointly determine the content and delivery method that will be most effective.** In addition to standard topics, we have the depth of knowledge to develop training on customized topics when the need arises. We also provide regional trainings – such as Reasonable Suspicion and Risk Management for Highway Supervisors – where attendees can benefit from the wider range of discussions that often occur in these settings.

A partial list of free training available to PACIF members includes:

- **flagger certification** for public works and emergency personnel;
- **customized driver training** for public works, EMS, and fire personnel;
- **customized and specialty trainings**, such as Permit-Required Confined Spaces with both classroom and field components;
- **regional risk management leadership** workshops;
- individualized training **for highway supervisors on high risk VOSHA standards**;
- **specialized human resource training** to build performance management skills and improve knowledge of HR requirements and best practices;
- **24/7/365 access to more than 200 online courses** in public works, recreation, law enforcement, and human resources that are available via a training platform that boasts a wide range of enhanced capabilities such as allowing members to track all employee training in one location; and
- **significant discounts on VLCT MAC** workshops and custom trainings.



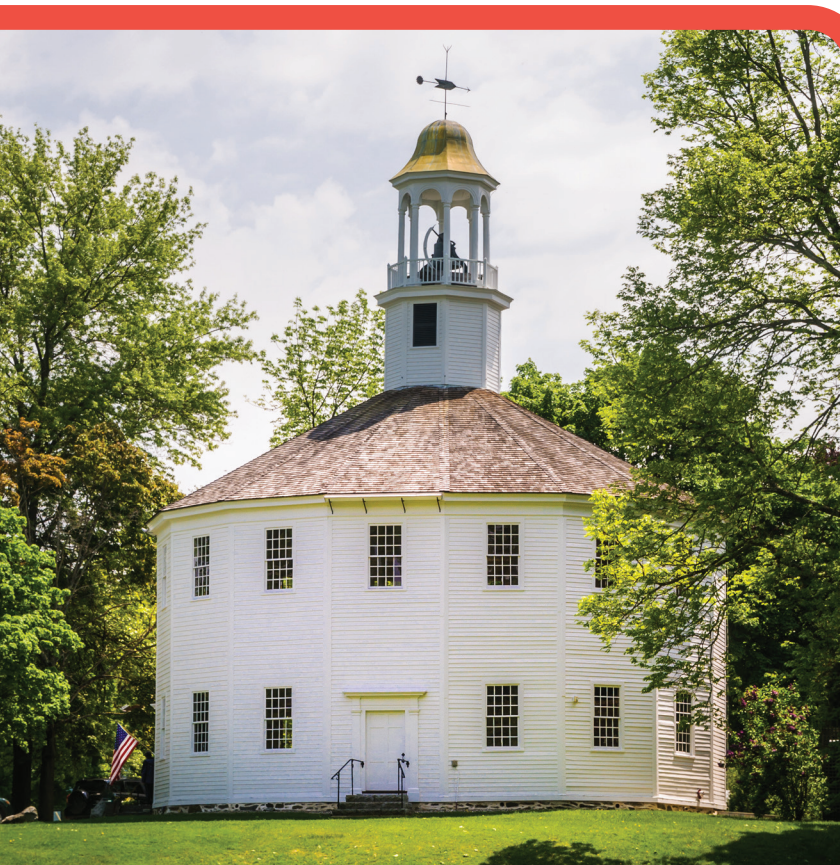
Richmond Town | Underwriting Services

PACIF's in-house underwriting team is **exceptionally accessible and helpful**. Members may not realize exactly what this team does, or all the ways it benefits them — even though they may be in contact frequently! Underwriting staff typically serve members by:

- answering coverage questions,
- completing exposure changes and updates,
- coordinating and assisting with requests for Certificates of Insurance,
- assisting with renewals,
- determining renewal pricing,
- reviewing members' proposed contracts for appropriate insurance requirements,
- coordinating coverage and billing for the Assigned Risk workers' compensation coverage required for volunteer fire departments, and
- conducting annual workers' compensation audits.

In 2020, in order to place more underwriting-related information and power at members' fingertips, we launched the **PACIF Policy Portal, which gives members online access to their underwriting information and renewals**. This portal is also handy for generating reports, adding or terminating coverage on structures and vehicles, and making payroll adjustments. The newest module, introduced in 2021, lets members generate their own certificates of coverage (COIs). And coming soon is a PACIF Policy Portal tutorial on our PACIF Learn platform!

PACIF also believes that members are best served by scheduling their buildings with accurate values. To achieve that, PACIF has a professional appraisal firm appraise all buildings that have a scheduled value of more than \$100,000. This **ensures that each member's cost of property coverage is based on accurate facility information and current reconstruction costs**. This prevents members from overpaying for property coverage on structures that are scheduled for more than what reconstruction is likely to cost. Of course, this is a free service, because PACIF always looks out for members' long-term interests.



Richmond | Loss Control Town | Services

Municipalities have a lot of exposure to risk, yet few have the resources to manage it effectively on their own. **That's why every PACIF member has an experienced loss control consultant to help them understand, prioritize, and implement risk management best practices.** Our years of municipal experience across all lines of coverage allow us to provide you with practical information, guidance, and targeted training that really make a difference. When needed, we're **happy to roll up our sleeves and work directly with your staff to implement our recommendations.**

Our risk management skills are not limited to guidance and advice. For example, we can help you start or reinvigorate a Safety and Health Committee and assist you in enacting other best practices that can be key to controlling your workers' compensation costs.

We are also **well versed in all things VOSHA.** Beyond offering routine help in identifying and correcting potential safety and health violations, we can help you work through the complexities of addressing hazards and managing regulatory communications in the aftermath of a VOSHA compliance inspection. We are always there for you!

PACIF loss control staff are also **experts in the FMCSA drug & alcohol testing requirements for commercial motor vehicle operators.** Rely on us for invaluable assistance and resources for complying fully with these complex and changing regulations.

Our staff are happy to offer their skills, knowledge, and time to help your municipality move to the next level in risk management. What's not to love?

“

Working with PACIF after our VOSHA inspection was extraordinary. [Our loss control consultant] very actively and competently guided us through every step of the process. He was unbelievably helpful, thorough, and friendly all the way to the final meeting and penalty negotiation. He provided PACIF templates for VOSHA-compliant program materials and helped us set reasonable, practical guidelines for our programs. As he navigated our response to the inspection, he remained very focused on achieving the best possible outcome and helped us show good faith effort by launching immediately into solving our safety problems. His input improved the overall situation significantly.

Lee Krohn
Town Manager
Shelburne

”

Most municipalities lack a dedicated human resources (HR) professional and simply do the best they can to handle the employment related issues that arise on a regular basis. **HR responsibilities and employment practices in general have become increasingly complex**, and, despite our members' best efforts, PACIF has seen an increase in employment practice liability claims. Because we recognize how challenging it is to handle everything HR, we created our own Human Resources Consultation Program.

In this program, a **full-time SHRM certified HR professional PACIF staff member, with extensive knowledge of municipal challenges**, assists members with:

- **understanding legal** requirements,
- **improving compliance** with legal mandates to reduce the municipality's risk of employment practice lawsuits, and
- **implementing a variety of HR best practices.**

PACIF's Senior Human Resources Consultant can provide services by phone or email or in person (COVID-19 restrictions permitting). Examples of services include:

- **assessing overall operational risk** from an employment practices perspective and recommending areas for improvement;
- **assistance with implementing key policies and practices;**
- **answering HR-related questions;**
- **training managers, supervisors, and/or governing bodies** on a range of HR principles and best practices; and
- **reviewing personnel policies and job descriptions** for adherence to best practices and recommending improvements.

The Senior Human Resources Consultant also oversees and coordinates PACIF's EPL Referral Program. Keep reading to learn more about it!

“

Jill Muhr led a training for all of our managers, and it was excellent. She was well prepared, not just with general content but also the specific local needs that she and I had discussed earlier. She also had her antenna up and responded to people's thoughts and questions in the room that day. Jill made it a really valuable session.

Peter Elwell
Town Manager
Brattleboro

”

With the ever-increasing complexity of employment and labor laws, making the wrong employment decision can result in costly claims. **PACIF's Employment Practices Liability (EPL) Referral Program helps members avoid costly errors by providing free legal assistance** from Vermont-based attorneys who have demonstrated employment law expertise.

What's the Value of This Program?

Members are able to **discuss their specific situation with experienced panel attorneys and obtain clear and actionable advice** that helps them navigate potentially complex legal issues that include employee discipline, termination, fitness for duty, state and federal family and medical leave statutes, union matters, and ADA compliance.

The legal advice helps members make sound and legally compliant decisions, greatly reducing the potential for successful employment practice claims.

How Does the Program Work?

After contacting PACIF staff to obtain a referral to one of our vetted legal firms, members will receive **up to three free hours of legal assistance** – or even a little more if that will help to resolve an issue. **When terminations may be involved, we will provide members with up to eight free hours of legal consultation.**

“

The attorney responded quickly and efficiently with what we needed. He has also made himself available by phone for night meetings and would even have come down if we had needed it. The Selectboard has greatly appreciated and respected his advice and instruction. We have been very happy to have this service. Thanks for facilitating this valuable program.

Deb Jones
Finance Manager
Sharon

”

The partner legal firms understand that prompt follow-up is necessary to address time-sensitive issues. They all have substantial experience with employment practice law, and many of the attorneys routinely work with Vermont municipalities, so they already have relationships with many of our members.

This popular program is based on the classic logic “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Members report it provides exceptional value by **helping them make well-informed decisions that greatly reduce the potential for EPL claims.**

Access to a referral begins in a conversation with PACIF's Senior Human Resources Consultant, Jill Muhr.

Municipal law enforcement agencies face many operational challenges, including **higher than average exposure to risk through injuries, auto accidents, and lawsuits**. PACIF has a highly experienced Law Enforcement Consultant on staff to help members reduce these risks. This well-respected former Vermont municipal police chief **works directly with member municipalities and their police departments and constables** to help them understand and work through the ever-expanding range of issues that law enforcement faces.

This consultant **understands the real-world complexities of law enforcement operations** and finds practical ways to put his risk management experience to work for PACIF members. He closely monitors new legislation and court decisions that change law or police practice and ensures that policies are updated and that the changes are communicated to members. He also offers valuable assistance in the areas explained below.

Liability consultation to assess the agency's current documentation procedures, operations, training practices, and job performance review process. If appropriate, detailed recommendations and guidance to reduce liability will be made.

Policy communication and assistance to ensure that members have access to existing PACIF Law Enforcement policies and are using them (or their equivalent) effectively.

Claims review and follow up with individual members to discuss potential prevention measures. For complex claims or incidents, he is involved shortly after we are notified to provide legal counsel with objective insight that supports our claim defense.

Hiring consultation to advise members on best practices for recruiting, hiring, and retaining officers. Also provides customized advice and guidance to managers and governing bodies who are hiring new police chiefs.

First responders' health and wellness advice to support officer physical fitness and mental wellness strategies. Facilitates access to mental health resources in the aftermath of traumatic events and crisis situations.

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I have used this program in many ways, and I give accolades to VLCT PACIF for creating it. When Springfield was in a time of transition, Trevor was instrumental in setting up the process of our search for a new Police Chief. He helped me create the job description, he wrote interview questions specifically about police work, and he even served on our interview panel. Without Trevor's help I couldn't have done my job nearly as well. He has continued to be a valuable resource while our new Chief is revising the Town's law enforcement-related policies. We have found Trevor to be really, really helpful all around.

Thomas Yennerell
former Springfield Town Manager

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As part of our core mission, PACIF created grant and scholarship programs to support members' risk management efforts. Both are great ways to help **stretch your equipment and training budgets, particularly when a need is urgent and unplanned.**

For 2022, PACIF grants provide 100 percent reimbursement of up to \$10,000 for qualified equipment, facility improvements, or other items that directly reduce the risk of claims.

John Lawe scholarships provide reimbursement of qualified training costs for groups and individuals up to \$2,500 per member per year. If you aren't already using this funding to increase your staff's knowledge and their value to your organization, you should be!

Every year, these two programs alone can save a large municipality up to \$12,500 or a small one as much as \$3,500.

For details about these programs, go to vlct.org and type Grants and Scholarships into the search field. The fact that their annual funding is fully exhausted every year attests to their popularity and value to members.

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The Town of Essex would like to thank you again for supporting our safety equipment grant. We feel that the portable light tower will be extremely helpful when we are making emergency repairs to our infrastructure during nighttime hours. The safety of all our Public Works employees and the general public is our top priority during emergencies.

Aaron Martin, P.E.
Utilities Director and Town Engineer
Town of Essex

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Most municipalities have commercial motor vehicle (CMV) operators – such as snow plow drivers – who fall under US DOT and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) requirements for licensure, hiring, and drug and alcohol testing (as explained in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations). These **requirements are varied and complex, and not complying fully with them can subject municipalities to fines** from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

PACIF has developed a comprehensive drug & alcohol testing program to make it **easy for members to comply with this challenging federal mandate**. Key elements include:

- **free random drug and alcohol testing** by a convenient mobile service that complies with all DOT requirements;
- **a detailed operations manual with extensive guidance** to help members establish the required drug & alcohol testing policy and comply with other regulatory elements;
- **information and sample forms** on how to compile driver qualification files;
- **access to Invest EAP for referrals to substance abuse professionals** in the event of a positive test;
- **updates** when FMCSA requirements change;
- **DOT-compliant Reasonable Suspicion Testing Training** for supervisors of drivers; and
- highly knowledgeable loss control consultants to provide **advice, assistance, and guidance for implementing these procedures**.

PACIF's all-inclusive support for CMV operations takes the guesswork out of meeting the onerous federal standards – and **makes the entire process a whole lot easier**.



When employees or their family members are under stress, there can be negative consequences in the workplace. That's why PACIF partners with Invest EAP, a Vermont-based nonprofit organization, to assist members in both personal and professional issues.

For personal matters, **all PACIF member employees and the people who live with them can contact Invest EAP directly for convenient and confidential personal guidance and valuable resources on a wide range of issues** relating to emotional health as well as family, financial, and legal matters. They can call or visit the website 24/7/365. Services including short-term counseling and limited professional financial or legal consultation are completely free.

This EAP benefit supports managers and supervisors in additional ways.

- Supervisors struggling with an employee who is undergoing personal or performance issues can contact EAP and receive a management consultation.
- When an employee who is a CMV driver fails a federally mandated drug or alcohol test, your Designated Employer Representative (DER) should call to receive a free referral for the employee to see a qualified substance abuse professional.
- After a tragic event that affects one or more employees, EAP can conduct a workplace critical incident stress debriefing to help staff cope with the emotional aftermath of the incident.

Invest EAP is developing ways to **help first responders**, with **specially trained professional counselors** and the new peer mentorship program for Vermont first responders called SECURE (Skills and Experience for Calling Up Resiliency). SECURE's mission is to train first responders as mentors to provide sustained, long-term support and prevention resources to their peers who may be in crisis.

InvestEAP can also coordinate training to help members build a workplace culture of dignity and respect. This training is provided by their partner, Abundant Sun. Respect in the workplace and similar trainings are eligible for John Lawe Scholarships!

Learn more and explore Invest EAP's online tools by visiting **investeap.org** and logging in with the organization password **vlct**. We encourage first responders to also visit **SECUREpeer.org**.



Cyber threats are one of the biggest risks for public entities right now. Current national claims data confirms that employees are the weakest link in the information security wall. In addition to hardware and software security measures, providing **regular employee training in how to detect these threats and not click on questionable links has proven effective** at reducing the incidence of successful cyber attacks.

In 2022, **VLCT PACIF is offering free access** to Knowbe4 Cyber Employee Awareness training for all members' employees who have an account in their municipality's email system. **KnowBe4 is the world's largest integrated platform** that provides online security awareness training and simulated phishing attacks. All members will be eligible for KnowBe4's "Diamond level" service. This service **provides short & fun monthly trainings to email users to periodically remind them to be on the lookout for phishing and spear-fishing attempts.**

Members can also choose to purchase KnowBe4's optional **Phish ER service**. This sends bogus emails to users and notifies the member about which users click on the decoy links, so that additional training can be provided. It is expected that members will purchase the services at a discounted rate and then seek reimbursement from PACIF. More information on how to access this service will be available before year-end.

